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SUBJECT: USAID/MOZAMBIQUE RECOMMENDS SUPPORT TO
ASSIST DROUGHT-AFFECTED IN CENTRAL MOZAMBIQUE

¶1. SUMMARY: THE RAINS HAVE COME LATE IN CENTRAL MOZAMBIQUE. UNFORTUNATELY, THE PREVIOUS AGRICULTURAL SEASON (2007-08) ALSO EXPERIENCED A POOR RAINY SEASON IN THIS PART OF MOZAMBIQUE AND PRODUCED SIGNIFICANTLY DEPRESSED CROP YIELDS. AS A RESULT, MOZAMBICANS IN MOST OF TETE PROVINCE AND THE NORTHERN DISTRICTS OF SOFALA AND MANICA PROVINCES ARE ALREADY SCAVENGING FOR WILD FOODS, CUTTING BACK ON MEALS AND SELLING ASSETS. USAID/MOZAMBIQUE STRONGLY SUPPORTS (1) THE WFP/MOZAMBIQUE REQUEST FOR P.L. 480, TITLE II COMMODITIES FROM THE OFFICE OF FOOD FOR PEACE AND (2) THE WFP/MOZAMBIQUE PROPOSAL TO THE OFFICE OF U.S. FOREIGN DISASTER ASSISTANCE TO FUND LOCAL/REGIONAL PURCHASES OF COMMODITIES TO ADDRESS THE WEAK WFP/MOZAMBIQUE PRRO PIPELINE. THE APPEAL FROM WFP/MOZAMBIQUE IS FOR BOTH SOUTHERN AND CENTRAL MOZAMBIQUE; THIS RECOMMENDATION IS FOR A USG RESPONSE TO CENTRAL MOZAMBIQUE ONLY. END SUMMARY

¶2. WHILE RAINS HAVE BEEN POOR IN THE SOUTH ALSO, THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE IS NOT MORE FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS IN SOUTHERN MOZAMBIQUE. FOOD HAS BEEN DISTRIBUTED ALMOST NON-STOP IN THE SOUTH FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS DUE TO POOR RAINS. HOWEVER, THE GOVERNMENT OF MOZAMBIQUE CONTINUES TO ENCOURAGE PLANTING CORN IN SOUTHERN MOZAMBIQUE, DESPITE THE FACT THAT THE RAIN PATTERNS HAVE SHIFTED SIGNIFICANTLY AND IT IS NO LONGER APPROPRIATE TO PLANT CORN IN THIS REGION OF MOZAMBIQUE. WHILE THERE ARE NEEDS IN SOUTHERN MOZAMBIQUE, THE GOVERNMENT OF MOZAMBIQUE SHOULD BE RE-INTRODUCING LIVESTOCK IN THIS REGION, AS WELL AS CROPS THAT ARE EITHER DROUGHT-RESISTANT OR APPROPRIATE FOR LIVESTOCK. THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE HAS NOT TAKEN ANY STEPS TO ENCOURAGE FARMERS TO ADAPT TO CHANGING CLIMATIC CONDITIONS, AND AS A RESULT, EACH YEAR, THE CORN CROP HAS FAILED IN THE SOUTHERN PROVINCES. THE GOVERNMENT OF MOZAMBIQUE IS PREPARED TO CONTINUE TO ASK THE DONOR COMMUNITY FOR FOOD ASSISTANCE FOR THE POPULATIONS IN THE SOUTHERN PROVINCES AS LONG AS THE DONORS ARE WILLING TO PROVIDE COMMODITIES FOR DISTRIBUTION. FOR THESE REASONS, USAID/MOZAMBIQUE DOES NOT RECOMMEND ASSISTANCE FOR THE SOUTHERN REGION INCLUDED IN WFP/MOZAMBIQUEQS PRRO.

¶3. THE SITUATION IN CENTRAL MOZAMBIQUE IS DIFFERENT. THIS AREA FIRST SUFFERED FROM FLOODING AND THEN POOR RAINS LAST YEAR. THIS YEAR, THE RAINS HAVE STARTED AT LAST, BUT THEY ARE LATE. ACCORDINGLY, FARMERS ARE PLANTING AGAIN (AS THEY PLANTED EARLIER WHEN THE RAINS WERE SUPPOSED TO HAVE COME) BUT THEY CAN NOT

EXPECT A CROP UNTIL THIS SUMMER. IN ORDER TO ASSIST THESE FARMERS THROUGH THIS PROLONGED LEAN SEASON, DCHA/OFDA IS ENCOURAGED TO FUND THE WFP/MOZAMBIQUE REQUEST TO PURCHASE LOCALLY/REGIONALLY FOR IMMEDIATE DISTRIBUTION IN CENTRAL MOZAMBIQUE. USAID/MOZAMBIQUE ALSO STRONGLY SUPPORTS WFP/MOZAMBIQUE'S REQUEST TO DCHA/FFP FOR A CONTRIBUTION OF P.L. 480, TITLE II COMMODITIES FOR DISTRIBUTION THIS SUMMER BEFORE THE CROPS ARE HARVESTED. THIS USG SUPPORT WILL NOT ONLY ASSIST THESE FARMERS THROUGH THE LEAN SEASON, BUT WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE TO PROVIDE RAPID ASSISTANCE IN THE CASE OF FLOODING THIS YEAR.

14. TETE AND THE NORTHERN DISTRICTS OF SOFALA AND MANICA ARE SEMI-ARID AREAS. THE TERRAIN IN THIS PART OF MOZAMBIQUE IS EITHER MOUNTAINOUS (ALONG THE ZAMBEZI RIVER) OR FLAT. IN EARLIER DAYS, THERE WAS INFORMAL TRADING WITH ZIMBABWE. HOWEVER, GIVEN THE WOES OF ZIMBABWE, NOT ONLY DO MOZAMBICANS NOT GO TO ZIMBABWE TO SELL (OR BUY) GOODS, BUT MOZAMBICANS NO LONGER CAN FIND WORK AS DAY LABORERS IN ZIMBABWE WHEN TIMES ARE TOUGH IN MOZAMBIQUE (AS THEY ARE THIS YEAR). IN ONE DISTRICT, IT WAS REPORTED THAT SOME OF THE WILD FRUITS ARE NO LONGER AVAILABLE BECAUSE RESIDENTS HAVE BEEN RELYING ON THEM FOR THE PAST YEAR AS PART OF THEIR DIET. UNFORTUNATELY, IN THIS PART OF MOZAMBIQUE, THERE IS NO SECOND CROP, SO WHEN THE MAIN CROP IS POOR OR FAILS, FARMERS ARE FORCED TO BEGIN TO SELL ASSETS, SUCH AS ANIMALS. ALL THESE COPING METHODS, INCLUDING A REDUCTION IN THE NUMBER OF MEALS EATEN EACH DAY, HAVE BEEN PRACTICED FOR MONTHS NOW.

15. USAID/MOZAMBIQUE'S MISSION DISASTER RELIEF OFFICER AND ASSISTANT MISSION DISASTER RELIEF OFFICER TOURED THIS AFFECTED AREA IN DECEMBER TO ASSESS THE SITUATION, IN LIGHT OF THE APPEAL FROM WFP/MOZAMBIQUE, AS WELL AS THE REPORTS OF CHOLERA. THEY MET WITH DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS, TOURED COMMUNITIES WITH DISTRICT AGRICULTURAL ADMINISTRATORS AND VISITED WITH THE DISTRICT HEALTH STAFF.

16. DISTRICT HEALTH AUTHORITIES DID NOT REPORT SIGNIFICANT CASES OF CHOLERA IN THESE AREAS. THE SPIKE IN CHOLERA CASES IN MOZAMBIQUE ARE WHERE RAINS HAVE STARTED AND FOLLOW MOZAMBIQUE'S ANNUAL TREND OF INCREASED CHOLERA AS THE RAINY SEASON BEGINS. MOZAMBIQUE REPORTS AN INCREASE IN CHOLERA EACH YEAR DUE, IN LARGE PART, TO POOR SANITATION PRACTICES. HOWEVER, TO-DATE, THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH IN MOZAMBIQUE HAS BEEN ABLE TO RESPOND TO THIS INCREASE, WITH ASSISTANCE FROM WHO. RECENT HEALTH DATA WAS NOT READILY AVAILABLE, BUT ANECDOTALLY, DISTRICT HEALTH AUTHORITIES NOTED WORSENING TRENDS IN GROWTH RATES FOR UNDER FIVES AND LOW BIRTH WEIGHTS DURING THE PAST YEAR.

17. FEWSNET HAS REPORTED ON THE LATE START OF THE RAINS, AS WELL AS THE INCREASED FOOD PRICES IN THIS REGION OF MOZAMBIQUE. ALL THESE MAJOR INDICATORS DEMONSTRATE THAT THE NEED FOR HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE NOW IN THIS REGION. SHOULD FLOODING OCCUR IN FEBRUARY 2009, THE SITUATION WILL BE AGGRAVATED AND WFP/MOZAMBIQUE HAS NO STOCKS ON HAND TO RESPOND TO A DOUBLE HUMANITARIAN CRISIS.

18. ACCORDINGLY, USAID/MOZAMBIQUE STRONGLY URGES DCHA/OFDA TO FUND THE WFP/MOZAMBIQUE PROPOSAL FOR \$5.0 MILLION TO PROCURE CORN AND PULSES EITHER LOCALLY OR REGIONALLY FOR DISTRIBUTION IN CENTRAL MOZAMBIQUE AND URGES DCHA/FFP TO PROVIDE A P.L. 480, TITLE II CONTRIBUTION OF CORNMEAL AND PULSES

TO THE WFP/MOZAMBIQUE PRRO TO REDRESS THE EFFECTS
OF THE DROUGHT CONDITIONS IN CENTRAL MOZAMBIQUE
UNTIL THE 2009 CROP IS HARVESTED.

AMANI